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primitive peoples, and further, to impress them, I added that my prestige (a familiar concept to natives) when I returned home would depend to a great degree on how much I knew about their customs and how accurate was my information. This was something they could understand and was, moreover, essentially the truth. They, in turn, wanted to know about "my people." So I told them about my mother, father, sisters, brother, and other relatives. Kinship here is important, and as I was asking about their relatives, it was therefore understood that they could ask about mine, or any other thing in which they were interested.

I was particularly fortunate in that the chief or "luluai" of the village was a very intelligent and fine person. His wife, also intelligent and an attractive personality, announced that she was my sister, and it followed naturally that her mother became my mother. Their house was opposite mine, and from the beginning a warm friendship sprang up. The chief, his family, and most of the Lesu people developed an attitude of responsibility for my welfare. They were rather flattered at my having come to study them instead of a neighbouring group. Word of my visit spread rapidly throughout the island, and natives from distant parts came to see so strange a phenomenon as a white woman living alone in a native village. After a while I had invitations from chiefs in other villages to visit their places. Besides this attitude of responsibility for my welfare, the natives also took the position of instructors. It was they who were teaching me the language, the magical spells, the myths and folk-tales, etc., and they took their job seriously. One day, after several months in Lesu, I made a rather amusing mistake while conversing in the native language. The verbal

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123 slip was repeated all around the village as a good joke,
522 and I thought it was funny too. But not so an old man who
554 had been my principal instructor in the language. Much annoyed, he came to see me. He asked if I didn't realize that everyone knew he was my teacher, and that when I made a mistake it reflected on him? I was properly humble and said meekly that I would try and do better next time.

124 My field technique consisted of several procedures. I
126 worked with the most intelligent natives, men and women, as informants. We had long sessions at my house, when I secured magic and other ethnological data privately with one or two individuals at a time. Then, too, I attended every ceremony that took place during my stay and had long discussions about the rite after it occurred. I never went uninvited, but I was invited to everything. This was true also for purely masculine occasions such as the men's feasts. To these a couple of the important old men would escort me. I would sit quietly to one side, munching a banana or taro, and taking notes. My notebook and pencil accompanied me everywhere, and the natives took it quite for granted that I should write everything down. I explained that my memory was not good enough to remember everything they told me or that I saw, and so I wrote it down. This they understood, and some of them said that if they had writing, they would remember much better too.

123 Other times I would go to the gardens with the women, sit with them as they prepared the food, or join them as they gossiped and took their ease after a day's work. In the casual everyday life I was much more with the women than with the men. I felt quite free at all times to wander through the village, visiting my friends, and they in turn

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disorder and confusion; but play in that it is all done laughingly, and the native term for it *muril* is literally translated "play fight." Brakko also gives the Hawk women coconuts, and now they return home. Both Molung and Brakko are assisted in the collection of the necessary taro and coconuts for this rite by women of the Solema clan.

But even though the rule is that it is the Hawk women who dance and engage in their more or less destructive gaiety when an Eagle woman is pregnant, or *vice versa*, this does not prevent the exception from happening. At the scene just described, Maerabit, a member of the Eagle moiety, joins in the dancing of the Hawk women. But its only significance, according to the natives, is that Maerabit always plays the clown and joins in any dancing or fun that may be going on. She is a grandmother and a woman past middle-age, but she is also a born jester, and is always amusing the crowd with her antics. The mere fact that her moiety would ordinarily bar her from participating in these hilarious rites will not stop her. Her grown-up daughters are ashamed of their mother's clownishness, and occasionally remonstrate with her, but Maerabit goes joyously on.

The playful fighting does not stop at the end of the one occasion just described, but is continued all during the pregnancy period, whenever the women of the village are assembled. Perhaps they are sitting on the ground chatting, after finishing their cooking, when suddenly a woman of the Hawk moiety jumps on the back of an Eagle woman, or pulls her loin-cloth, or jumps up and down on the outstretched legs of the woman as she sits on the sand. It is always done playfully and with much laughter both on the part of the participants and of the onlookers. The mother of the pregnant woman, both real and classificatory, is the particular victim of the women of the opposite moiety. But frequently the clowning becomes quite general, all the

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women present engaging in it. For a first pregnancy it is carried on more extensively than for a later one.

If it is the first one, the pregnant woman exchanges part of a baked taro with a woman who has had children successfully. The latter will eat half of a baked taro and give the remaining half to the expectant mother, who will return the gift with another half of a taro. It is believed that this exchange of taro will help the woman to deliver her child successfully. On the whole, she eats perhaps a little less than she did before. She thinks that if she eats too much the embryo will "fight" in her stomach. Certain fish containing many bones are taboo for either the pregnant woman or her husband to eat. This, however, is not strictly a pregnancy taboo, as it holds during the whole time of possible child-bearing, and applies to both the mother and her husband. It is believed that if the fish is eaten by either one, the future children will be hurt. When the child-bearing period is past the fish can be eaten. During childhood it is taboo to the female child, but not to the male.[1]

The woman who is pregnant goes about her daily work much as usual, and there is no custom of stopping work before the expected birth. However, exceptions are made in special cases. When one woman who had had several children born dead was again pregnant, she did not work quite as hard as usual after the fifth or sixth month. In her garden

[1] My discovery of the fish taboo came about in this way. A man from a bush village, but now living on the coast, presented me with a fish he had caught in return for a slight service I had rendered in giving some medicine to his sick child. Various women were present when the fish was given me, and immediately there was a great uproar—scolding of the man, much loud and angry talk, and the fish was taken away from me. It was not until they had quieted down somewhat that I could get at the cause for this sudden anger. It was explained that if I had eaten this fish I would never have healthy children, or perhaps they would be born dead. The man who had wanted to give me the noxious fish was called "an ignorant fool from the bush," after the women were convinced that he had no malicious intentions towards my "future children."

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taro which is not cooked in the bundles), and as she beats she tells how she did not want her son to marry because she thought he was too young, but how he did marry anyway. She appears amused with the incident, and tells it rather as a good story, showing no evidence of chagrin.

After about two hours or so of this lazy conversation, fourteen Ambwa women appear in the open clearing in front of the house where the infant now lies. They are gaily decorated with *kerapo* leaves stuck in their hair and in their armbands (*biuk*). Seven of the women belong to the Eagle moiety and seven to the Hawk, and they now do the *Kanduro* dance. It is a dance done in two-line formation; one line is made up of the Hawk women, and the other of the Eagle women. One Eagle woman (same moiety as the infant) leads the others in. She beats a bamboo pole with a stick and stands in front of the two lines of women and addresses the Hawk women in an angry tone: "You Hawk women have come. Now, we have no women. All the Eagle women have died. We have no Eagle men here either." This, I am told, is not true, and everyone knows it. It is just "talk play," a kind of polite depreciation, and is customary at this rite.

Then follows the dance. Maerabit, from Lesu, as usual plays the part of the jester, and rushes on the scene beating a drum, circles around the dancers, and goes through many absurd antics, maintaining a serious countenance at the same time. The effect is quite droll. She has a real sense of gaiety and rhythm in her movements. The audience greets her antics with loud shouts of appreciative laughter.

When the dance is over another group of women of the Hawk moiety, married to men of the clan to which the infant belongs, come on the scene, each carrying some food utensil. One by one they make a speech about the abilities of their husbands as food providers. One woman holds up a basket, saying: "My husband gets much food at

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sounded from within the enclosure. While the women sit and chat after the taro is in the *liga*, Macrabit, as usual, plays the part of the clown. She causes much merriment by taking a fishing-net and walking about with it as if she were a man. Two other old women play a form of hide-and-seek, hiding behind the trees and walking about in a creeping fashion. So also do they sit playfully on the legs and backs of other women. This occurs between women of different moieties, and resembles on a small scale the playful fighting of the pregnancy rites. I was told that it is now done because the boys were to be circumcised soon.

When the food is removed from the *liga*, most of it is left at Ponatlege, although the men eat a small part of it in the compound in front of the men's house, and some small bundles are taken home by the women. As they walk home, single file along the narrow footpath, baskets on their backs, some of them do their dancing step. There is a general air of jollification.

Late that afternoon much excitement and a real "before the ball"[1] atmosphere prevails. The women arrange the yellow *puhpuh* flower in their hair, put on their best loin-cloths and their *kepkeps* (breast ornaments) and *biuks* (arm-bands).[1] At sunset there is a final short dance rehearsal under Ballock's direction. When this is over all the women, much excited and carrying bundles of the yellow *puhpuh* as well as having stuck it behind the ear, start off for Ponatlege. The men set out a bit later. As the women enter the hamlet, an old man gives each one some white lime which she puts on her face.

Women and men from Langania and Ambwa are also present. The latter sit in small groups in front of the men's house and out in the compound. The women begin dancing almost immediately, and the men, much interested, watch

[1] There was also a demand for red crêpe paper and tinsel trimming from me, both of which were twisted around the hair.

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or less continuous source of income for the magician. In addition to this material advantage, his prestige is augmented, although a man could not rise to a position of great prestige merely because of his magic. A magician, although always perfectly sincere in his belief in the efficacy of his magic, is occasionally not above a little scheming in his profession. For instance, at the time of the wedding of Tsuros, Towi, her maternal grandfather, paid Niknik to make magic insuring a clear day for the rites. Niknik made the magic, but Teluk, a rain magician from the neighbouring village of Kabil, came and made magic to bring rain on the day of the rites in the hope that Towi would then pay him to get rid of the rain by another magical spell. But Towi had exhausted his finances, and Teluk was not asked to make magic for a clear sky. In discussing it everyone thought the joke was on Teluk, and they were much amused. Incidentally, it did rain the day of the rites, which thus had to be shortened.

MEDICAL SERVICES

Closely akin to the payments for magic are the payments for medical services. Medical treatment consists mostly in the use of certain leaves and roots, both internally and externally, and occasionally magic too is connected with it. There is one difference, however, between the payment for medical and magical services. For the latter, the magician is always paid when he makes the spell, and the payment is in no way affected by whether the desired end is obtained or not. But for the medical service payment is delayed until the efficacy of the medicine is proven and should the patient fail to recover no payment is made. The scale of payment varies with the medicine, which for the ordinary ills, such as swellings, stiff neck, headache, stomach-ache, for continuous urination (infant), pain in the shoulder, and to produce abortion, usually costs one *tsera*. Medicine to make a newly

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Therefore he would be careful. When he was finally assured that my servant was not within hearing distance he recited his spells. §32

Of course, a man does not make magic for a woman, or *vice versa*, whom he has not seen. Some preliminaries of courtship have passed between them. One of them at least has been attracted to the other, and sometimes the attraction may be mutual. It is then that the lover uses magic.

FLIRTING

There are ways of showing one's desires which correspond to our "flirting." For instance, a man may pull a piece of straw from a woman's straw apron and stick it in his arm-band. If the woman likes him she will pull it back. Or a man may make a small gift of betel-nut or a necklace of dog's teeth to his mistress. Borrowing fire is a frequent excuse for visiting a woman. A man will put his fire out in order to have an excuse to borrow a lighted faggot from a woman whom he desires to see.

A woman's method of leading a man on is the not very subtle one of exposing her genitalia. Sometimes she is in earnest, really wanting the man, as when one Lesu woman very simply and directly went up to a man from a bush village, exposed her genitalia and placed it next to him. They had intercourse, and later were married. At other times a woman may merely lead a man on for the fun of it. A tale of how two girls "devilled" one man was told to me by one of the women. Both are women of social importance, one being the wife of a former chief, and both are now grandmothers. With eyes gleaming with merriment over the tale, she related how she and another young woman were sitting by the *liga* and had tossed up their straw aprons and so exposed themselves. A man came up to take a baked taro from the *liga*, and seeing them he immediately had an §37, §22

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erection. He wanted to have intercourse with them, but they refused and said they were just playing. They told him to come closer and take the taro, but he only swayed back and forth in pain. Later the women lay down on a path in the bush and exposed themselves again. Once more the man saw them, had an erection, and wanted them. Again they refused and said they were only playing.

This tale was told to me without embarrassment, very dramatically, and amid shouts of laughter. A group of seven or eight women were present. Although all of them knew the tale, they laughed appreciatively at it and thoroughly enjoyed its re-telling, including the participant. The presence of several young children was taken for granted, and they too laughed, although not quite so heartily or understandingly as their mothers.

It has already been noted how the women use the same device of exposing themselves during their dancing, when they are feeling very gay, and how it is sometimes followed by intercourse.

SEX ACTIVITIES

The actual details of intercourse are naturally the same in or out of marriage, although some of the preliminaries may vary. A husband and wife each have their separate bed, never sleeping in the same one. In the past the woman slept in her straw apron, and to-day she sleeps with her loin-cloth on, as does also the man. When the man desires his wife he goes to her bed, and when he has finished returns to his own bed almost immediately. The woman never takes the initiative in going to her husband's bed, and when asked the question my women friends regarded such a procedure with horror, and asked if the woman should be a man.

The woman lies flat on her back with legs outstretched and as wide apart as possible. The man squats or kneels between her wide-open legs and supports himself by grasping